

\$2

OCTOBER 2020 | VOLUME 11 | ISSUE 10

YOUR DONATION BENEFITS THE VENDORS.
PLEASE BUY ONLY FROM BADGED VENDORS.

Reopening universities in a pandemic.
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MEET YOUR
VENDOR: **DEREK
ALLEN**, PAGE 3



GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP | WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICH.



Major donors sustain Groundcover

GROUNDCOVER STAFF

So many people have made monetary contributions to Groundcover this spring and summer, and many have continued donating periodically, allowing us to continue supporting our vendors despite low revenues. Of their own accord, several of our supporters have become monthly donors. This reliable income stream helps us build a solid financial base. Major support from First Baptist Church and Bethlehem United Church of Christ will help us make it through the fall.

In these difficult times, the outreach committees of many places of worship have conducted fundraising campaigns to help community members in need. We are so grateful that Groundcover News was chosen to receive some of those funds.

We thank you all for your generosity and thoughtfulness! Stay safe and well, and enjoy the fall colors.



Bethlehem United Church of Christ associate pastor Lily Fortel presented a check from the BUCC congregation to Groundcover News at the Groundcover outdoor office and distribution center.

Groundcover Vendor Code during COVID-19

While Groundcover is a non-profit, and paper vendors are self-employed contractors, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper. COVID-19 specific requirements agreed to by vendors following new training.

- I will wear a mask at all times while selling Groundcover News.
- I will use gloves, hand sanitizer or wash with soap to remove germs from my hands before selling and as needed.
- I will stay 6 feet away from others.

The following is our **Vendor Code of Conduct**, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

- Groundcover will be distributed for a voluntary donation. I agree not to ask for more than the cover price or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues of Groundcover.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling

papers and refrain from wearing it or other Groundcover gear when engaged in other activities.

- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other Groundcover vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.
- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor in downtown areas. I will also abide by the Vendor Corner Policy.
- I understand that Groundcover strives to be a paper that covers topics of homelessness and poverty while providing sources of income for the homeless. I will try to help in this effort and spread the word.

Our Statement of Solidarity with social justice movements

From its inception, **Groundcover News** has approached all its activities with belief in the following principles, as written on our website:

- All people have the right to dignity.
- Diversity has intrinsic value.
- Poverty is political — systemic change is necessary.
- Building community is essential to social change.
- Political effectiveness requires staying power.
- Solutions to poverty must involve people who are directly affected.
- Risks are necessary to create positive change.
- Meeting people where they are honors their skills and potential.
- We are committed to quality, professionalism, and accountability in everything we do.

We feel our attachment to these principles even more strongly today. If they resonate with you too, and you are looking for a way to make a difference during these life-changing times, please join us as a volunteer, supporter, friend or Board Member. To let us know, email: contact@groundcovernews.com.



MEET YOUR VENDOR



Derek Allen, vendor No. 177

In one sentence, who are you?
Derek Allen.

Where do you usually sell GCN?
Main & Liberty or Main & Washington.

When and why did you start selling GCN?
Six years ago, because I like the business it gives a person.

What words do you live by?
It's always going to be a brighter day.

What is something about you that someone on the street wouldn't know?
That I make music and produce songs.

What motivates you to work hard selling Groundcover?
Helping people.

What's the worst/best thing about selling GCN?
Worst: the bad energy from people about the homeless. Best: the feeling of meeting good people.

What is your superpower?
The ability to speak and get across to others.

What change would you like to see in Washtenaw County?
The police not always picking on the homeless people.

What would YOU ask?

If you have a question or issue you would like GCN vendors to discuss, email us at contact@groundcovernews.com

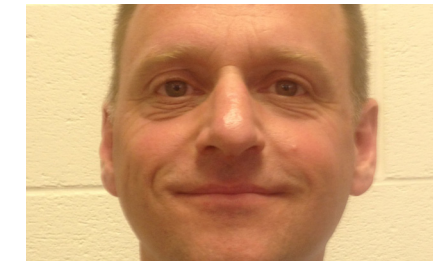
We will be featuring vendor responses in future issues.

Ray of light leads to sobriety and stability

In my darkest hour, I found a ray of light that may have been the tipping point during my trial of homelessness. I'm usually the person passing out blankets and taking my kids to soup kitchens on Christmas. I didn't see my turn coming. My life as I knew it was stripped away in a few months due to a perfect storm: a bad marriage and substance abuse. Long story short, I declared myself homeless in February of 2019.

I wasn't quite sober during the intake, but the caseworker wasn't concerned. I spent the rest of the winter and most of the summer in an alcoholic relapse. I was numb to the events leading up to and during my homelessness crisis.

The problem with giving money to people panhandling is that, if



JIM CLARK
Groundcover vendor No. 139

they were like me, they were going to use it to buy booze. That isn't the problem though. The problem is knowing that I still, as a homeless man, needed help with what I was not able to do for myself. Cash wasn't the answer.

I needed time. Time spent with me and on me. A team or a partner to make me their priority.

That ray of light I was looking for was Groundcover News. The staff and fellow vendors gave me a purpose, a sense of being part of something greater than myself. They made me feel like I belonged. Even during the pandemic crisis, staff members called vendors for checkups.

There is a natural social state for humans where that sense of importance and intimacy is a key source — the family. Groundcover News became my family for a few months and that made the difference in my regrouping and overcoming addiction. Today I have been sober for over a year, I have a job and have reunited with my birth family. For this and so much more, I am forever grateful for Groundcover News.

Restoring my license

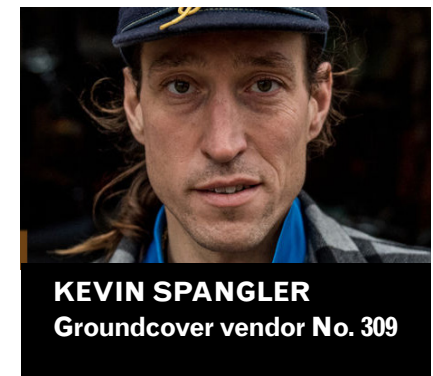
Boober is excited for the new semester and welcomes back students to campus! My journey to get my driver's license continues. I am collecting letters for the judge from the people who have been witnessing my sobriety over the last four years. Susan Beckett wrote a letter for me verifying my sobriety, as did my partner, Ariel, and one of my drivers, Jon. His letter said:

My track record of Kevin Spangler, who has helped me shy from alcohol, is a spot-on perfect example of independence from dependence: a fresh example, a new start, and an enduring spirit. Someone who won't let anyone, including himself, get in the way of what's right for himself, society, and his child.

My friend has attempted to help so many people with second chances because he believes in people, redemption, and serenity. Two years I've known Kevin. Nothing he has ever consumed resembled an alcoholic beverage.

We see each other most days out of the year, with an exception of a seasonal holiday. I understand this man's dining habits. I barely see him drink soda pop!

If anyone shows the most



KEVIN SPANGLER
Groundcover vendor No. 309

potential in character through a second chance, it's Kevin Spangler. He's proven that without a driver's license — don't know what I'd do without it — he can run a business from the ground up. Doubtful any here could face the adversity and challenges this man has had and spin their life around 180 degrees.

I can personally say I'm lucky to be clean. I survived thanks to this man. He, who has thrived when taken away from privilege. I have my license. I'm happy to help him out on the drop of a hat. However, to see my friend again have vehicle operating privileges, that would truly make me happy. People do change and when they do, you witness a miracle. It's so rare for someone to truly change.

I understand standards are

needed in civic order. Witness for yourself if you don't believe all those who are with him daily. I challenge you to witness for yourself how much of a functional member of society Kevin Spangler is. The health and well-being of him personally, his behavior and desires. It's in the streets of downtown Ann Arbor, all day into the late-night evening.

This letter means so much to me. That my actions are impacting others around me in a positive way lets me know that I am on the right path.



GROUNDCOVER

Mission

Creating opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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Ann Arbor affordable housing millage on ballot

It is widely acknowledged that Washtenaw County needs more affordable housing, and the COVID-19 pandemic clarified the extent to which homelessness is also a public health crisis. Affordable housing was already scarce, then, according to the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development, the County lost over 800 units in the past few years while adding only 45 new units. Though there are 191 units underway, it is clear that the County is actually going backward in addressing the housing needs of our community.

Derailing the sale of the library lot in the fall of 2018 deprived the Affordable Housing Trust Fund of \$5 million. That money was to go towards replacing the 100 units of housing lost when the old “Y” was demolished. Many who supported making the library lot a Center of the City Commons argued that a dependable funding stream from a millage was a better approach to providing affordable housing than proceeds from a one-time sale.

The proposed millage on this November’s City ballot is to provide that funding stream for the next 20 years. A 20-year timeline allows for long-term planning and access to certain additional funds that require a demonstrated funding stream for at least 15 years. Additional years are needed to work through local zoning and site plan approval processes.

Ann Arbor’s portion of the county-wide goal to add 3,139 affordable units by 2035 is 140 units. Other methods of increasing low- and moderate-income housing in Ann Arbor’s hot rental market have proven ineffective. Privately-owned complexes built with tax subsidies can revert to market-rate housing after 15 to 30 years, which is how the county recently lost 800 units. Private developers routinely turn down incentives to make a small percentage of their units affordable. Private landlords very often refuse to accept Housing Choice Vouchers, the government rent supplement for low-income renters.

The City has identified properties it owns that could be developed as rental units. These developments can range from group homes to apartment complexes. The millage will allow the City to maintain ownership of that land and negotiate for:

- Developers to offer a mix of unit types and rental levels
- Developers to optimize the number of affordable units for those who make up to 60% of the Area Median Income or have special needs



SUSAN BECKETT
Publisher

- Developers and their successors in ownership to accept Housing Choice Vouchers
- Incorporation of sustainable materials and energy efficiency
- Developers to provide adequate and appropriate space to accommodate the operations of the Ann Arbor Housing Commission
- Developers to explore options with the City to provide dedicated space for other public uses and/or non-profit space

Community support for the millage looks strong. In 2020, Washtenaw Housing Alliance received a grant from the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation to conduct voter polling on an affordable housing millage. An equal distribution of 400 residents from across all five of the City’s Wards were polled in mid-June 2020 to determine voters’ potential support for a millage that would “provide dedicated funding for the purpose of building, acquiring, and maintaining permanently affordable housing and related social services for low-income families and individuals earning 0-60% of the Area Median Income.” Seventy-seven percent of those polled were in favor and that number increased when they were informed of the kinds of supportive services that may also be provided. Also, City Council voted unanimously to put the millage proposal on the 2020 ballot.

Up to 20% of the millage revenue may be used for supportive services to increase the housing stability of residents of millage-developed housing. This includes but is not limited to mental and physical health services, financial services, job skills, daily living skills, crisis management and conflict resolution, and youth programming. Supportive services provide the stability that increases family and community well-being, particularly for those under 30% AMI.

Providing stable, affordable, local housing reduces commuting and reduces emergency service costs. It is also a step Ann Arbor can take to ameliorate the effects of racial redlining which forced many Black people to remain renters.

How you can help

- Vote YES on PROP-C
- Share information about the millage
- Endorse the Partners for Affordable Housing campaign. Organizations and Individuals can become supporters at www.partnersforaffordablehousing.org/supporters

- Like PAH on Facebook (PAHAnnArbor) and on Twitter (@PAH_A2)
- Join a PAH outreach, fundraising or communications committee
- Donate to PAH www.partnersforaffordablehousing.org/donate
- Host a Zoom meeting or Town Hall to spread the word



Approved Affordable Housing Millage Ballot Language

Shall the Charter be amended to authorize a new tax up to 1.000 mills for construction, maintenance, and acquisition of new affordable housing units for low-income individuals and families making less than 60% Ann Arbor Area Median Income, and for providing social services for the residents of such housing for 2021 through 2041, which will raise in the first year of levy the estimated revenue of \$6,550,505. In accordance with State law, a portion of the millage may be subject to capture by the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority and the Washtenaw County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

Millage Amount, Length and Outcomes

- 1-mill for 20-years would generate approximately \$6.5M per year for 20-years
- We estimate the millage proposal would increase taxes for the average homeowner by \$125/year (based on \$125,000 in taxable value; \$250,000 in market value)
- We estimate we could create 1,500 new units of affordable housing targeted to a diverse population of people earning between 0-60% of Area Median Income (AMI)
- Approximately 375 units (25%) of the 1,500 units would be created as permanent supportive housing, for those who are very low-income and need supportive services; the remainder of the units would not include services, but they would have affordable rents.

Voting on November 3

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS 2020 NON PARTISAN VOTING GUIDE

Registration information and tips

The Michigan Voter Protection hotline, 1-866-687-8683, gets you to a real human being who will help you work through procedural questions about registering and voting. Their website, 866ourvote.org/state-information/michigan/ is also informative.

Prior to October 20, 2020, you have many ways to register to vote:

- Online at www.mi.gov/VoterRegistration;
- At a Secretary of State branch office;
- At your city, township or county clerk’s office;
- At any state agency that provides public assistance or services to people with disabilities;
- By mailing in a completed voter registration application postmarked by October 19th, 2020; or
- Through a voter registration drive.

Make sure your signature on your ballot application matches the one on your voter registration card. If you can’t find your card, you can visit your local clerk’s office with picture ID and ask to see the card they have on file for you. It is also likely that it is the same as the signature on your driver’s license.

Voting Absentee

No excuse is needed to vote absentee. Voters are encouraged to vote before Election Day by absentee ballot. If you voted in recent elections, you may receive your application in the mail. Complete the application and either drop it off or mail it to your local Clerk’s office at your earliest convenience.

If you haven’t received your application, visit www.michigan.gov/vote to either apply online for an absentee ballot or download an application and return it to your local Clerk by October 19.

From September 24 to November 2, you can visit your local Clerk’s office to

vote absentee in person before Election Day.

At the polls

Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on November 3. Everyone in line at 8 p.m. must be allowed to vote. Go to VOTE411.org to find your polling place and to learn what’s on your ballot before you vote.

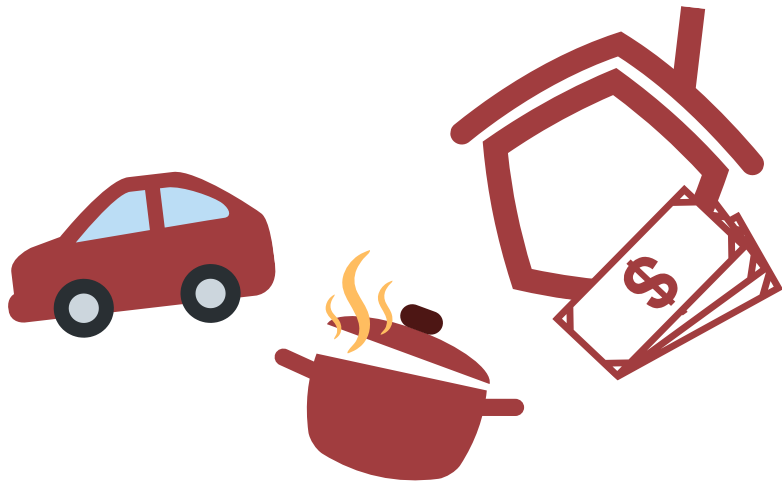
A Voter Registration receipt or Voter ID Card is helpful, if you have it. However, you do not need a photo ID to vote! You will be asked for photo ID when you vote. If you do not have photo ID or do not have it with you, you can sign a simple form and vote. However, some first-time voters who registered through the mail or a voter registration drive and did not include ID when they registered to vote may need to provide some documentation to vote. Electronic or paper copies of any of the following will work:

- A photo ID with your name and picture (regardless of the address or if it has an address)
- Driver’s license or personal ID card from any state
- Michigan High school or college ID
- U.S. Passport
- Military or government-issued photo ID
- Tribal ID card
- A non-photo ID with your name and address on it
- Current utility bill
- Bank statement
- Paycheck stub
- Government check
- Any other government document

Allow time to wait in line and bring a mask. You will not be refused your right to vote, but face masks are highly encouraged. Poll workers are required to mask up. Masks and sanitizers are available to all. If you run into a problem — there is help. Call the Election Protection Hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683).

Is COVID-19 making it hard to make ends meet?

If you're struggling to keep up with rent, mortgage, or utilities payments, or need help paying for food, childcare, or gas for your car the **Barrier Buster Network** is here to support you.



Visit **Washtenaw.org/2818** or contact one of these Barrier Busters agencies to help you pay your bills as soon as possible:

Housing Access for Washtenaw County

Phone: 734.961.1999
Website: housingaccess.net

SOS Community Services

Phone: 734.484.5411
Website: www.soscs.org

Washtenaw Health Plan

Phone: 734.544.3030
Website: www.washtenaw.org/WHP

Jewish Family Services

Phone: 734.769.0209
Website: jfsannarbor.org

Together we are strong: GEO strikes for a safe campus

In a time of great uncertainty, I, like many others, looked to the University of Michigan administration to take important steps both to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to end police violence against marginalized peoples, especially given how racial inequality has been at the forefront of the American consciousness this summer. But my trust was misplaced.

The U-M administration's reckless reopening plan endangers human life. As stated in a leaked document from the U-M president's own COVID-19 Committee on Ethics and Privacy, the likely hot spots will disproportionately harm communities of color and other vulnerable populations, such as the homeless. Instead of listening, the administration ignored its constituents, the surrounding community and expert public health advice.

Alarming, we have started the semester without a robust testing plan, which is particularly dangerous with a large group of asymptomatic young people. In just the first two weeks, despite low testing, over 10% of on-campus students had to be quarantined and the dance building was closed. The positivity rate on the U-M COVID-19 dashboard has been rising quickly but updated only weekly. We are seeing all the warning signs of a COVID-19 outbreak.

The virus is not the only thing that disproportionately affects communities of color. The police murders of George



BEN GIORDIAS
Groundcover contributor

Floyd and Breonna Taylor and so many others serve as a tragic reminder that policing is a public health issue. The American Public Health Association warns that over-policing leads to both physical and psychological trauma in marginalized communities. As a society, we must look beyond our violent and systematically racist approach. We should urgently consider defunding the police to invest in direly needed social services and support that actually reduce crime.

These were the main reasons that the Graduate Employee Organization, or GEO, went on strike at the start of the fall semester. The graduate students did so only as a last resort. GEO desperately tried to resolve our concerns through both official channels and protests during the entire summer. All these dire calls for action went unheeded. The unresponsive administration failed us and the surrounding community.

We demand better. We demand a safe and just campus; a robust testing system, expanded childcare, financial support for our members, administrative support for our international students, demilitarized campus police, reallocation of 50% of the campus police budget to community-based justice initiatives, and cutting ties with both AAPD and ICE.

In the face of these dangers, I am heartened by the way the graduate students stood together for our community. We stood in solidarity with the Residential Advisors who went on a wildcat strike against the dangerous conditions the university administration placed them in. We are so grateful for the trade unions who refused to cross our picket lines on various construction sites across campus. We are thankful for the financial and logistical support we received from people all across the country.

Graduate students held the picket lines through the pouring rain. Others took to online spaces producing vast collections of information, educating the community about the immediacy of our demands. We marched through the streets demanding change. In this short amount of time I have learned so much, but above all, this strike has taught me that individually I am weak, but through solidarity, we are strong. Together, and only together, we can build a better world for all of us.

GEO Strike Demands

1. For all graduate students and until a vaccine is available, the unconditional right to work remotely

2. More resources and support for international student concerns

3. For all graduate students, support through emergency stipends and extensions to funding and degree timelines to accommodate COVID-induced delays

4. That the University develop plans for testing, contact tracing, and campus safety

5. Defund and disarm U-M Division of Public Safety and Security

6. Cut all ties with Ann Arbor Police Department and ICE

The Graduate Employees' Organization voted to end the strike on September 16 after U-M filed an injunction against the labor union. GEO members voted in a super-majority to accept the university's offer after nine days of striking.



On September 11, protesters organized by Students Demand Representation and the Graduate Employees' Organization marched from the Michigan Union to Mosher-Jordan dining hall and back in solidarity with striking University of Michigan Residence Advisors and M-Dining undergraduate student workers. Photo credit: Emily Tamulewicz.



What is Antifa and should it make us afraid?

MARTIN STOLZENBERG
Groundcover contributor

Fascism is not to be debated; it is to be destroyed!

— Buenaventura Durruti, Spanish political activist of the 1930s

Even the pronunciation of the name is ambiguous; it's an-TEE-fa. The name is a contraction of the word "anti-fascist." The movement goes back to Europe in the 1920s and 1930s to fight the European fascists in Italy and then Germany. What's so bad about that?

It's not Antifa's objectives that most people object to, it's their methods. Their contention is that confrontation, even violence, is the only way to bring about change. They don't believe in change through political action. They view themselves as willing to physically defend themselves and others from white supremacist violence. This is what sets them apart from other leftist groups.

Antifa has no real leadership here in the United States and follows a decentralized organizational structure known as leadership-less resistance. All groups operate independently and do not report to a central organization or single leader. This lack of control suggests that it will never achieve any political goals. But that is not their aim. What they want is to destroy or diminish the impact of the alt-right.

According to Mark Bray, author of "Antifa: The Antifascist Handbook," the movement emerged in the United States in the 1980s as a group called Anti-Racist Action. By 2015, the movement was pretty much dormant here — until the rise of Donald Trump and the alt-right. Antifa now opposes and seeks to confront all signs of racism, whether neo-Nazis, neo-fascists, Ku Klux Klan, white supremacists, skinheads, the alt-right or other right-wing supremacist groups.

Currently, Antifa's key objective is to build a movement that insulates us from president Trump's policies. They believe Donald Trump embodies fascist authoritarianism and his administration is a menace. They also seek to resist anything that can lead to fascism, even at the local level.

They go directly after alt-right events and far-right speakers. Some of their actions are non-violent but outrageous, including shouting, chanting and forming human chains to block right-wing events. These actions sometimes lead to violence when their targets react. Antifa members are adept at using social media to their advantage, such as "doxxing" — releasing personal information

about their opponents online, sometimes resulting in getting alt-right proponents fired from their jobs by identifying them.

They also engage in traditional political activities such as flyer campaigns and community organizing on behalf of anti-racist and anti-white nationalist causes. They conduct research to monitor far-right activities, hold conferences and workshops on anti-fascist activities, help with disaster response and distribute literature at book fairs, among other actions.

Antifa groups participate in rallies and protest marches. The most extreme members carry pepper spray, knives, bricks and chains. That can lead to violence. Sometimes they are successful in getting alt-right events canceled or cut short by their tactics.

Antifa members at demonstrations are sometimes distinguished by their dressing in black garb. This harks back to the Cold War era of West Germany. A common symbol of Antifa combines the red flag of the 1917 Russian Revolution with that of the 19th-century anarchists. In this way they identify with these groups' militant actions, not their political aims. Sometimes they cover their heads with black masks or black helmets to avoid identification by police and their opponents. They will move together as a "black bloc" at rallies as a show of solidarity.

There is no doubt that Antifa's willingness to use violence distinguishes them from other leftist groups. But they say they only use it as a means of self-defense. They use the historical argument that if opponents of Nazi Germany had been more forceful in their opposition to the Nazis in 1930s Germany, perhaps World War II and the Holocaust could have been averted.

There are no hard numbers of the followers of this extremist group. Some idea of its prominence is garnered from a University of Maryland consortium that studies terrorists. Their paper estimated between 2010-2016, 53% of terrorist attacks in the United States were carried out by religious extremists, 35% by right-wing extremists and 12% by left-wing or environmentalist extremists. Since the Antifa movement is coupled with environmentalists and since it didn't become active until 2015, this probably misrepresents their current prominence, but it is deemed to be small.

As a matter of fact, Antifa's bark is bigger than their bite. Law enforcement officials across the country assert that the group plays a minor

role in violence. President Trump, however, periodically mutters about having Antifa declared a terrorist organization. It would take an act of Congress or Constitutional amendment to do so since only international groups such as Al Qaeda can currently be labeled as terrorist.

This would trigger First Amendment challenges, and other extremist groups would likely be labeled as terrorists. Because of Antifa's unstructured nature and decentralized organization, such a designation is unlikely to have much impact.

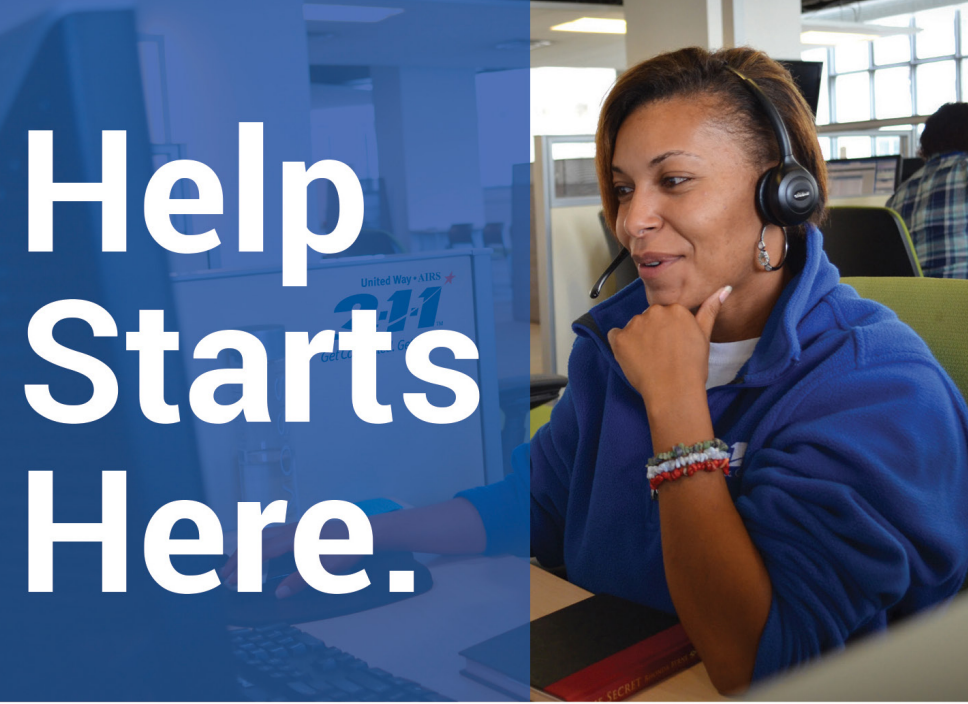
President Trump, during June 2020, vehemently scapegoated Antifa as part of his criticism of the George Floyd protests. He painted the protests as a scary conspiracy, one that Antifa is behind, with demonstrations to burn the country down using the excuse of seeking social justice. In tweets, email fundraisers, and personal appearances, he blamed looting on Antifa. Seth Jones, an expert on terrorism at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, wrote this about the Floyd riots, "The vast majority of looting appeared to come from local opportunists with no affiliations and no political objectives. Most were common criminals."

Burning and looting are not Antifa's *modus operandi*. Antifa uses street-level force to prevent the rise of what they see as fascist movements, not for attacking capitalistic targets. An FBI Washington field office report said that, "not one of the first 22 protest-related indictments nationwide indicated that Antifa played a role in looting or property destruction."

One must be careful about what is attributed to Antifa. There are a significant number of fake accounts on social media platforms calling themselves Antifa. Twitter shut down several accounts that were being operated by a white supremacist group called Identity Europa, posing as Antifa and calling for violence in white suburban areas.

In early June, a rumor spread in the city of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, that supposed busloads of radical leftists were traveling there from Seattle or Spokane, according to local residents and social media. In response, 30-50 men armed with semi-automatic weapons occupied downtown streets on successive evenings and sported tactical apparel. Some of the men were wearing insignias of alt-right militia

see **ANTIFA** on page 11 ➡



Call 2-1-1 for information and resources for: healthcare, childcare, prescription expense assistance, food, utility assistance and more!

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Get Connected. Get Answers.

GROUND COVER NEWS ADVERTISING RATES PACKAGE PRICING

Size	Black and White	Color	Approx. Size (W x H)
Business card	\$49.95	\$65.95	2.5 x 1.5
1/8	\$89.95	\$129.95	5 x 3 or 2.5 x 6.5
1/6	\$129.95	\$165.95	5 x 4
1/4	\$159.95	\$215.95	5 x 6.25
1/2	\$299.95	\$399.95	10.25 x 6.5 or 5 x 13
Full Page	\$495.95	\$669.95	10.25 x 13

Three Months/Three Issues: 15% off

Six Months/Six Issues: 25% off

Full Year/Twelve Issues: 35% off

Additional 20% off ads with coupons

Reopening universities in a pandemic

In mid-March the World Health Organization declared that the Wuhan COVID-19 epidemic had become a global pandemic. They advised all nations to inform their citizens and take the necessary precautions to stay safe and avoid infections. K-12 schools were closed across the entire United States. Higher education campuses closed their buildings and advised their students to go home or stay off campus and follow the CDC guidelines. The most urgent and the most piercing question on the minds of the students, teachers, and parents became: “When will the schools reopen?”

Most U.S. universities and colleges that closed during the Spring semester did not reopen to conclude the academic year. The University of Michigan and other campuses spent the spring and summer debating whether to reopen schools for in-person classes, remote learning, or hybrid learning, which combines remote and in-person learning.

The back-to-school plan drafted by President Mark Schlissel and Provost Susan Collins was implemented after a broad consultation with the Board of Regents. The updated plan known as the “Maize and Blueprint” called for the University to reopen all three campuses — Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint — during the Fall semester.

In-person classes will be offered until November 20. After a nine-day Thanksgiving break, the semester will finish remotely, and final exams will be held online. But many classes are available for students to attend online.

Large classes which are typically held in large lecture halls will be strictly remote. Small seminar classes or lectures which have a limited number of students could continue with the in-person module by observing the social distance guidelines. The “Maize and Blueprint” plan has also called for “medium-size classes to be held as a hybrid of the two. This and other means can be used to diminish classroom density.”

Mask wearing is mandatory. Social distancing based on CDC guidelines is encouraged. Students were advised to self-quarantine for two weeks before returning to campus. Dorms and dining halls have opened with tough restrictions. The University planned to administer 3,000 coronavirus tests for students every week, and monitor the trend of COVID-19 cases,



WILL SHAKESPEARE
Groundcover vendor No. 258

hospitalizations and deaths on the U-M campus. The Washtenaw County Department of Public Health weekly COVID-19 reports will be viewed and considered for post-reopening decisions.

University leadership teams have been very concerned about the possibility of COVID-19 case spikes in their campus’ towns. Michigan State University issued a press release in mid-August which stated that all MSU classes would be held online. That decision was made after there was a dramatic increase in the number of COVID-19 infections at the East Lansing campus.

Eastern Michigan University, which had planned to hold in-person classes on August 31, changed course on August 27. Four days before move-in, EMU officials announced that the school would postpone student move-in for three weeks. Classes started as scheduled with all classes being fully remote through Sept. 20. Nearly 80% of programs will continue to be remote but others, such as Nursing, will have in-person components with physical distancing measures in place.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill announced on August 17, that it was cancelling in-person undergraduate classes after a coronavirus outbreak quickly spread across campus.

During the summer, University of Michigan administrators reached out to UNC public health experts and administrators for guidance. On August 16, one day before UNC cancelled in-person undergraduate learning, the Michigan Daily student newspaper interviewed University of Michigan President, Mark Schlissel, and City of Ann Arbor Mayor, Christopher Taylor, about preparation for students’ return to campus. President Schlissel stated that he was very confident in his back-to-school plan.

The Michigan Daily also asked Mayor Christopher Taylor how the

City and university will work together to ensure social distancing takes place off and on-campus. The mayor said, “... enforcement is really going to be our last resort. Our goal throughout all this is to communicate. ... We are going to make sure that the people understand those rules, that people understand the reasons behind them, and that they are there to make you as an individual safer.”

Journalists, including Kamal Patel and Isaac Lee, have reported that many Ivy League universities such as Princeton, Penn, and Columbia backtracked on their initial plans for a hybrid fall semester and on-campus living. Dr. Anthony Fauci said in a talk to CNBC Health and Science News that America won’t get back to normal until late 2021. In an interview with journalist Andrea Mitchell of MSNBC he stated, “If you’re talking about getting back to a degree of normality prior to COVID, it’s going to be well into 2021, towards the end of 2021.”

Education Week reporter Mark Lieberman predicted in July 2020 that “few schools in the United States will make it through the 2020-2021 academic year without some form of remote learning for some portion of the student body, for some period of time.”

Even as universities confidently implement their plans to reopen campus, the realities of COVID-19 have compelled them to change their strategies. Universities and the surrounding communities have to provide their students with the guidance, resources and flexibility to have a safe semester.



On September 18, for the first time in U-M's history, the faculty senate passed a vote of no confidence in university president Mark Schlissel (above) in response to his re-opening plan, past leadership in handling the sexual assault allegations regarding former provost Martin Philbert, and other related matters.

A conversation on virtual learning with U-M student, Kateryna Karpoff

GCN: Do you find it harder to form relationships online with professors and students?

KK: YES! The difficulty of forming relationships online, both with my professors and peers, is the largest hurdle that I am facing in my classes so far. I have always gained a lot by being able to attend in-person office hours and communicate one-on-one with my professors about points of confusion in the material. Now that this option is gone, I feel an illusion of disconnect from my professors, and have trouble believing the entire experience is “real.” Additionally, in-person classes allow us to turn to the student next to us and work through concepts together, hold each other accountable on paying attention, and clarify assignments and deadlines. Since this is no longer an option, I feel that I am more on my own and studying independently when compared to the past.

GCN: What do you feel that you’re missing out on by not being on campus?

KK: A lot of the college experience stems from the spontaneity that arises when you physically put thousands of young adults with creative ideas, ambitious dreams, and passionate opinions in proximity of one another. Without that community in place, students have much fewer opportunities to spark debates, bounce ideas off of one another, and form connections over similar interests. This is what I miss the most about college since going virtual, though am grateful for the three years I enjoyed this social freedom.

GCN: Do you think online learning is a good alternative for your own learning style?

KK: Though I can speak to several indisputable benefits of online learning, I would not say I prefer virtual learning to in-person lectures. Speaking to the benefits, I save significant amounts of time by not having to commute between classes, and am far more efficient during my breaks. Despite this, I have trouble staying engaged while sitting in my bedroom for hours in front of a screen (specifically when I have the option of shutting my camera off), and I definitely benefited from having access to individuals in-person as this is much better suited for my individual learning style.

Karpoff is a senior at the University of Michigan studying biomolecular science and writing.

COVID-19 and the school experience in Washtenaw County

WILL SHAKESPEARE

Leslie is considered an essential worker during this pandemic. Her two children are enrolled in the Dundee School District. During the spring of 2020, when most of the schools were closed and classes shifted to online remote learning, Leslie, a University of Michigan Health System pharmacist, expressed how difficult it was for her and others like herself to come home from work and then spend many hours trying to help their kids with remote learning technology. She found it especially hard to navigate remote learning assignments and exams for two kids in two different grade levels.

This fall, the Dundee School District now allows two days for in-person classes. However, most educational experiences for the students are still remote learning. She is still strained because one of her oldest daughters, who helped tutor the two younger kids, is moving out. Leslie is now looking for tutors.

One of **Cheryl’s** children is hoping the SAT test she is signed up for doesn’t get canceled like the ones in the summer were. She heard of one family that had to drive eight hours to get to an open testing site, so she feels lucky she only has to drive 45 minutes to get to one near Ann Arbor. Her child in middle school was assigned an AAPS activity where the students drew an identity map and then uploaded it to a shared space. The only issue was that there was no button/link that allowed the kids to upload their pictures!

Matt, the father of a second-grade boy in the Ann Arbor Public Schools said that he’s not sure how much second-grade material his son is mastering, but he has learned a lot about technology and problem-solving.

Jessi lives in Ann Arbor and is working from home while managing her two daughters’ schoolwork. She is grateful for the swift action her school district took in closing down physical buildings and the technological support they received through the school. But online school has still presented her household with challenges. This is the account she sent Groundcover about the start of her daughters’ school year:

“Our daughters are in general education, so I acknowledge the privilege they have had to interact virtually with their teachers and classmates since March. I have heard this is not necessarily the same experience for parents whose children have an Individualized Education Program, or IEP. We have also been fortunate to benefit from the school district’s



Jessi and her two daughters, Ofelia (11) and Elona (9).

technology distribution, which has made remote access possible.

“Still, our oldest, who is in eighth grade, says it’s hard to stay focused during class time. Lessons get boring and she feels there are ways to easily get distracted because of what’s happening in the home. Even though the school district provided all students with ChromeBooks that have certain websites locked, she can still find ways to become distracted by accessing websites like YouTube on their computers.

“Our youngest, who is in fifth grade, is eager to jump around in place whenever she has a short break during class time. She says she has “so much energy to get out.” One day she had a recess break before lunch that was about 20-30 minutes. The next day it was under 10 minutes. Our daughter was grateful once the lunch break came because she said her eyes were hurting a little.

“It is a big shift to have our kids learning at home, but thanks to our daughters’ teachers, school staff — especially those prepping and delivering boxed meals — Peace Neighborhood Center and 826Michigan, our family feels supported at this critical time.

“826 continued remote after-school tutoring last spring and summer writing workshops so our daughters could stay connected with their mentors. The Peace staff has worked hard to provide a safe and secure space for our kids to use during morning class sessions this semester.

“The back-to-school experience has been drastically different from years in the past, and parents have had to become more involved in their children’s educational progress. As school districts troubleshoot issues with online learning, it will be up to community resources, non-profits and teachers to step in and fill the gaps that families need during this time.”

K-12 reopening, remote learning, and social inequities

WILL SHAKESPEARE

What is remote learning? What is digital equity? These are questions that most schools have had to tackle at the start of the school year. The debate over reopening America’s K-12 schools started in March 2020. It is ongoing in September. It will continue in October, and all through the 2020-2021 academic year.

In a remote learning environment information is relayed to the student by the educator or information source through technology, such as discussion boards, video conferencing and online assessments. There is no physical proximity, though it can be integrated with real-time interaction and collaboration with peers.

Ann Arbor Public School officials decided during a Zoom meeting on July 23 to start the new school year with remote or virtual learning. The surging COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult for the administration to reassure parents, teachers, students, and staff about their safety from community spread of COVID-19. Ann Arbor Public School District designed the “A2 Virtual+ Academy” for grades 6 through 12.

How does it work? The remote learning model would give students an individualized course load to progress through their work at their own speed. AAPS also plans to provide students with devices such as iPads to participate in their online schoolwork. They are also providing assistance with internet services if students are in need.

By May 4, 2020, school districts across the state of Michigan, including Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti were scrambling to help all the K-12 students gain access to a laptop computer and high-speed internet connectivity. State and local governments collaborated with several non-profit organizations to narrow the gap in remote technology access in communities left behind. For example, Ann Arbor Public Schools Superintendent Jeanice Swift worked hard to set up meal pickup sites and tech device

distribution centers for low-income students.

The Ann Arbor Public School District is one that kept quiet about in-person classrooms. On Tuesday, Sept. 8, this school district restarted as a fully remote learning option. The remote learning experience has been very controversial.

M-Live reporter Martin Slagter, reported on the parental grievances in Ann Arbor. During an AAPS public comment session on Friday, September 11, parents were concerned about everything from “too much time in Zoom meetings to the boredom associated with lack of social interactions with classmates.”

For kids who come from poor and disadvantaged families, there are some research indications about severe setbacks.

Recent research, such as McKinsey and Company’s analysis of online learning data during COVID-19 in spring 2020, has found that there will likely be a widened education gap because of the educational limits COVID-19 has created. Researchers from the McKinsey and Company’s study say that the shift from in-class learning to online learning “could put the average student (in New York City Public Schools) seven months behind academically — the average Latinx student lost 9 months; and the average Black student lost 10 months.”

Although community transmission of COVID-19 was the key reason for school closure during the pandemic, educational experts have been worried about how students without access to computers or reliable WiFi will fare. Students who are homeless or who do not have a consistent place to sleep will also have difficulty finding a place to study. With Michigan ranking sixth among the nation for the most homeless students in the 2015-16 school year (according to U-M’s Poverty Solutions), that is an issue here.

The key question is, what is the best way to restart the school year in the new COVID-19 era? Resuming in-person instruction remains a complicated decision.

Participatory democracy

KEN PARKS
Groundcover vendor No. 490

Participatory democracy — these two words became the clarion cry of Students for a Democratic Society, the national student activist organization that was active throughout the 1960s. The Port Huron Statement was their visionary proposal of 1962 and lives on in the hearts of all freedom-loving human beings. Though the original group only lasted a decade, in 2006 a new organization by the same name took root.

The idea of participatory democracy — which emphasizes a citizenry's broad participation in political processes — has an interesting history that goes to human origins and indigenous cultures who upheld council fire and respect for

the interrelatedness of everything. The Grandmothers had an important and treasured voice. "The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State" was a landmark book by 19th-century political philosopher Friedrich Engels. It offers a better understanding of reparations, land sovereignty, food sovereignty and the ongoing struggle for freedom from exploitation and oppression.

We will benefit from this discussion and debate as we experience the increasing dysfunction of our current social contract. Resmaa Menakem is a current intellectual worker and therapist with great insight and healing presence. His interview on NPR's "On Being" is inspiring. Residents of Ann Arbor could lead the way with a discussion of his book, "My Grandmother's Hands." Our

community would then be better prepared to participate in the global movements for freedom with a better understanding of *one struggle, many fronts*. We could then be better practitioners of *think globally, act locally*. Consider the work for the Commons in Ann Arbor. Alan Haber, the first president of SDS, is still active at the age of 84 and dedicated to preserving and extending the commons — resources managed by the community for individual and collective benefit — and the ongoing creation of participatory democracy.

I hope we can all meet on Indigenous People's Day, the second Monday of October, in whatever way that is helpful to promote their freedom. Decolonizing begins when you listen to your heart and discover the heart of reality, our

ever-changing interrelatedness. If you come with a clean heart, it opens the door to your particular indigenous heritage. Even European heritage has indigenous roots.

Let's take a natural breath, bring COVID-19 into the public commons, and listen to the message. We are never too young or too old to learn that doing things differently may be more helpful than conducting business as usual. Take care of your immune system. Let's end the use of toxic pesticides and other dangerous chemicals in Ann Arbor and then promote that globally. Sunshine and Vitamin D are basic needs. May we grow ecovillage awareness and come together in a good way. Let's reflect and work for the common good. Thank you for being.

Their hearts were flayed

RONALD PAGERSKI
Groundcover contributor

My reaction when happening upon the homeless camp was one of wonder mixed with sadness. People were huddled under makeshift shelters and a few had ragged tents. Their attire showed years of wear. A large pot of something boiling simmered on a smoky campfire. It smelled none too good. This camp in Detroit was near a large railroad yard. The year was 1964.

My cousin and I came across the camp by accident one day. We were heading to a hobby shop to purchase slot car parts. We were in our early teens. We didn't speak to any of the homeless people there. I remember they didn't speak to us either. But their eyes spoke volumes. Sadness, loss, anxiety emanated from them. Years later, in my mind's eye, I can still see the desperation and emptiness they held inside. My heart is heavy with that memory.

Catharsis

JIM CLARK

While I was homeless in Ann Arbor, I encountered several challenges. One particular challenge was finding the privacy needed to "let my hair down" or experience catharsis. The need for catharsis is especially important for neurological health. Wikipedia's definition of catharsis is "the purification and purgation of emotions — particularly pity and fear — through art or any extreme change in emotion that results in renewal and restoration." Emotional health depends on the ability to discharge negative energy, much in the same way a sneeze discharges "negative" particles, or a cough or vomiting discharges toxic stomach contents.

Whether you need a heaving sob or an evocative yoga session, space has to

be made for this powerful, intimate and life-supporting self-care action. Being homeless meant not ever having that ability. In order to have a good cry, for example, you need time to get to a private space, time to let it happen and time to recover. Finding a spot that afforded that much security was nearly impossible. Even in the parks there was no place to wait since there were others constantly nearby. There are other ways to purge emotions, however, and those require an equal amount of personal space.

Today, I live in relative solitude. I have roommates, but the grounds are large enough so that I can avoid them when I need to be alone. And alone I can be. Not too far from family, but alone enough to breathe.



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Bethlehem Church is home of the Groundcover office



SEPTEMBER 2020 EVENTS AT BETHLEHEM

Bethlehem has cancelled all in-person activities due to COVID-19. Here are ways you can experience our 10 am worship service on Sundays:

Most Simple - Tune in to our live radio broadcast on WAAM 1600AM. You can also listen to WAAM on Tune In by following this link : <http://www.mainstreamnetwork.com/listen/player.asp?station=waam-am&listen=Listen+Live>. (Click the shiny "play" button on the lower left of the page, ignoring any advertisements.)

- Facebook

Beginning at 9:55 Sunday, you will find our Live Video at Bethlehem's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2>

Following the 10 am service on Sunday, the video will be posted to the Bethlehem UCC website: www.bethlehem-ucc.org. We have begun posting the service to [Bethlehem's YouTube page](#), it will be available there at 10 am on Sundays.

Thank you all. We look forward to worshipping together.



[Sunday Worship Times](#)
10:00 am Sanctuary
streamed on Facebook

Sudoku

★★★★☆☆ 4puz.com

9			4		7			
5				8	3			
	8		6	9				
2	7				1		4	
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1		4				9	7	
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Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

➡ ANTIFA from page 7

groups.

After they waited in vain, they declared, "We scared them off." Similar actions happened in other cities around the country. In an article for The Guardian, Lindsay Schubiner of the Western States Center stated that "far-right and anti-government groups are eagerly helping spread misinformation about anti-fascist protesters gathering in local communities. Extremist groups find them useful for activating their supporters

and sowing turmoil and division."

Antifa has been somewhat successful in countering the far-right. They view their violence as self-defense, needed because the far-right politics are inherently aggressive. We should distinguish between Antifa, the actual movement, and Antifa, the thing that Trump has positioned as his enemy. Chances are you will find Antifa wherever the far-right is up to some mischief. It is not Antifa we should fear. If you want to know what will make Antifa go away, it's simple. Have the alt-right go away.



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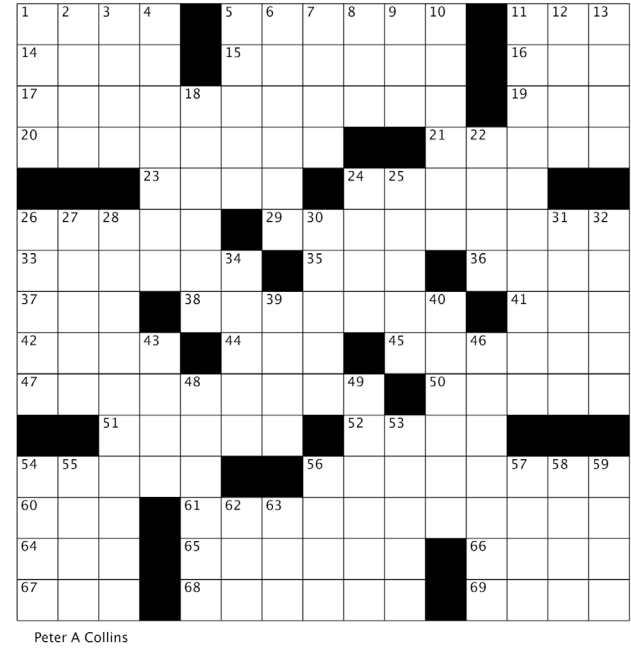
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- ACROSS**
- Like some crawl spaces
 - Stayed away from
 - "The Lord of the Rings" being
 - First family name
 - Llama relative
 - West of Hollywood
 - * Swashbucklers, for instance
 - Circulate socially
 - Members of a class
 - Politician's crime
 - Arnaz of early TV
 - Words following rule or court
 - Vandalized, in a way
 - * One who's loaded, slangily
 - From Scandinavia
 - Trig function
 - Raison d'__
 - Significant time span
 - * What ruthless people show
 - Coltrane's instrument
 - Sitarist Shankar
 - Multitude
 - Tossed back a brewski
 - * "Hold on a bit"
 - Meanders
 - "Everything all right?"
 - Stick in a fire?
 - "Baby Baby" singer Amy
 - Series of missed connections
 - "Jingle Bells" contraction
 - 2003 Pixar movie (and feat accomplished by rearranging the first four letters of the starred answers)
 - "Tell me more ..."
 - Toward the center
 - Meek
 - * Miz
 - Honors with a raised glass
 - God of love

- DOWN**
- River obstructions
 - Aid a criminal



Peter A Collins

- One might be hung in a restaurant window
- Walked in a cumbersome manner
- Bob __ (restaurant chain)
- 14-Across, notably
- Book where the Pentecost is mentioned
- Behind-the-wheel infraction, for short
- Brian, once of Roxy Music
- Like some earrings
- Meg March portrayer in 2019's "Little Women"
- Innocent one
- Email alternative
- Supply, as coins to a parking meter
- Broccoli __
- __ about (approximately)
- Attractive, in modern lingo
- Beginning of el ano
- Tennis star Ivanisevic
- Cemetaries
- Multitude
- Word with Am or slam
- Male and female
- Martini relative, for short
- Mousy
- Veering off course
- "That's my cue!"
- Peace between nations
- Get-up
- Cannon fodder?
- Small lakes
- Messi objective
- Russo of "Thor"
- Interactions that make observers go "eww": Abbr.
- Salty drop
- Buckshot or BBs
- Leaves
- Queen of Thebes
- Ice Cube and Dr. Dre's group, once

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Okt~mas: October 16, 17, and 18

Art on a Journey Gallery/Studio and MISSION Washtenaw would like to announce our fundraising event "Okt~mas." It is Christmas shopping in October and will be held at Journey of Faith Christian Church, 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. all three days. You are invited to come peruse the artists' creations in person with proper social distancing and masks, or to check out our website at artonajourney.gallery. Art on a Journey is an art gallery run by homeless and formerly homeless community members at Journey of Faith Church.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADVERTISE A COMMUNITY EVENT HAPPENING NEXT MONTH PLEASE EMAIL CONTACT@GROUNDCOVERNEWS.ORG



www.firstpresbyterian.org

Sunday Worship

9:30 a.m. YouTube & Facebook

11:00 a.m. Radio Broadcast
WAAM 1600 AM
www.waamradio.com

All Are Welcome!

Taizé Prayer Service

Tuesday, October 6, 7:00 p.m.
YouTube & Facebook

Sweet potato & black bean tacos

CHRIS KEMP
Guest contributor and
new Michigan resident

This dish is a great seasonal treat that's full of warm, savory flavor for fall dinners and not too time-consuming to prepare. It is easily adaptable so you can mix and match other flavors with it! The recipe below yields two servings but ingredients can be scaled to make more.

Ingredients:

Black beans — 1 can or 3/4 cup dry beans cooked ahead of time
Garlic — 2 cloves, chopped
Onion — 1 small or medium white onion, diced
Sweet potatoes — 1 lb, cut into 1 in chunks
Chili powder — 1/2 teaspoon
Olive oil or oil of choice — 2 1/2 tablespoons, divided
Corn or flour tortillas

Suggested additions (optional):

Cilantro, shredded cheddar cheese, avocado yogurt lime sauce

Directions:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.

Prepare black beans. If using canned beans, you will need one 16-oz can. If making from dry beans, use 3/4 cup dry beans and cook using your preferred method. Set aside in a bowl.

Lightly sauté onions and garlic with 1/2 tablespoon of the oil in a pan over medium-low heat until onions start to become translucent, about



five minutes. When finished, stir them into the bowl of black beans. If beans are unsalted, add salt to taste.

Spread remaining oil on a rimmed baking sheet, then add cubed sweet potatoes. Sprinkle a pinch of salt, ground pepper, and chili powder, then mix around until the sweet potatoes are evenly coated with oil and spices. Then spread out so they are in a single layer. Bake 20 minutes. Then, take sheet out of oven and use a spatula to turn over the sweet potatoes. Place back in oven for about 20 more minutes or until slightly browned.

Add the beans and sweet potatoes together on corn or flour tortillas and eat. It is also delicious atop a salad.

Optionally, prepare tangy avocado yogurt sauce by stirring together one 1/2 cup yogurt (Greek yogurt works well), 1 mashed ripe avocado and juice of one small lime. Drizzle over the black bean and sweet potato to add a bit of zest and creaminess.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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Fri 8:15am

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7pm (Spanish)

Sun 10:30am

During the LiveStream mass, make a spiritual communion by praying this or a similar prayer:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unit myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.



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